Remarks

The present Invention can be summarized for the present as a point-to-multipoint network between a head-end station and subscriber stations arranged to transmit packet-switched transport protocol packets, without the need to further segment the packet-switched protocol packets. The specification explains that by avoiding segmentation of such packets (e.g. Ethernet frames), the overhead associated with addressing each smaller segment is also reduced, thereby increasing available bandwidth and reducing processing delays. Simpler implementations resulting from the reduced overhead also mean that existing integrated circuits for use in other transport systems can be reused more easily, thus reducing costs.

Item 2.0: The Examiner rejects claims 1-17 and 19 as obvious over Rabenko in view of Data-over-Cable

Rabenko is alleged to show all the features of claim 1 other than "being arranged to..... transmit data.....without the need to further segment the packet-switched protocol packets".

Data over cable is concerned with transfer of IP traffic over a cable network transparently between interfaces for a network side and customer premises equipment of the cable network.

The Examiner argues that the disclosure in "Data over Cable" at page 53 that: "the packet PDU must be passed across the network in its entirety, including its original CRC", is the same as the claim feature of

"being arranged to..... transmit data.....without the need to further segment the packet-switched protocol packets".

This is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. A skilled person would realize that "passed across the network in its entirety" only means the packet PDU must not be altered as the packet is passed across the network, as normally the header can be altered. To achieve this, the packet PDU is

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encapsulated with another header. This does not prevent transmitting this packet as several segments which are then reassembled. Hence a skilled person would assume that this standard is not concerned how the encapsulated packet is transmitted, provided it all reaches the desired destination unchanged and without truncation.

This is confirmed by page 16 section 3.3 describing the network layer, which indicates that "This document imposes no requirements for reassembly of IP packets", which implies that segmentation of IP packets is possible.

Hence there is no disclosure or suggestion in either reference of the distinctive feature of claim 1 of "being arranged to..... transmit data.....without the need to further segment the packet-switched protocol packets".

Hence even if the two references were to be combined, the combination does not enable a skilled person to reach the invention nor to learn of its advantages. Hence there is no incentive for a skilled person to alter the combination to reach the invention, and claim 1 is not obvious.

Dependent claims 2 to 14 and 16, and independent claims 15 and 17 have corresponding features and so are acceptable for the same reasons.

Re Item 3.0: This rejection of claims 18 to 20 falls away as these claims have been deleted.

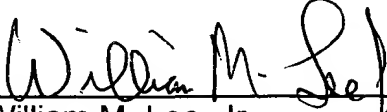Re item 4.0, claim 10 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Re item 5.0, an amended abstract is attached with the figure reference removed as requested. It otherwise is unchanged.

All the points raised have been dealt with, all the claims are now allowable and reconsideration is requested.

An appropriate Petition for Extension of Time is also submitted herewith.

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